

Classified By: DCM David Rundell, 1.4(b),(d)
O 301351Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0479
INFO ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 000488

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/29/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [SA](#) [EG](#) [SY](#) [KWBG](#)

SUBJECT: MARCH 12 ARAB 'QUAD' MEETING IN RIYADH

¶1. (C) Egyptian DCM Kassam (protect) provided Post with a readout March 24 of the March 12 Saudi/Egypt/Syria/Kuwait 'mini-summit' in Riyadh, and made the following

KEY POINTS:

- (C) The purpose of the meeting was to cement Arab unity in advance of the Doha Arab League summit.
- (C) Syria accepted to play a positive role with Hamas and the formation of a Palestinian unity government.
- (C) The four participants agreed that any Arab country can maintain relations with Iran based on its own interests, but not to the detriment of another Arab country.
- (C) The four agreed to accept any legitimate results from the upcoming Lebanese elections.
- (C) The GCC initiative for Gaza reconstruction is on hold pending agreement on a Palestinian unity government. Reconciliation efforts will simply continue if there is no agreement before Doha.
- (C) Kassam stressed that there is no daylight between Egypt and Saudi Arabia on Arab unity issues. King Abdullah and President Mubarak are in constant contact, he said, as are their staffs and lower level officials. The two countries have "an identity of interests," he added, as they are the "only two powers in the Middle East able to play positive roles" in addressing these issues.

¶2. (C) BUT IT DIDN,T WORK: In a follow-up conversation March 29, Kassam said Mubarak's decision not to attend the Doha summit was motivated by Egyptian disappointment with the "adamant" position of "Arab countries that supported Hamas" and were "not keen" to have a Palestinian unity agreement before Doha. Kassam added that the Egyptian Deputy Security Chief has been sent to Damascus for talks with Hamas officials based there and with the Syrians, in hopes of convening a further round of Palestinian unity negotiations after Doha.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Given Mubarak's decision not to go to Doha, the March 12 Riyadh meeting appears at this point to have failed in its purpose of engendering Arab unity, at least on the Palestinian issue. The course of events also calls into question Saudi efforts to forge a meaningful rapprochement with Syria, since it suggests no fundamental shift in Syrian support for "resistance."

FRAKER